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I am a resident of australia, however the monopolistic practices of microsoft
reach us here too, and I want to comment.

I agree with Red Hat's proposal that microsoft's donations be purely in
hardware, partly on the basis that they shouldn't be allowed to to spread
their monopolistic software (I agree that their browser is probably the best
in the industry, but then they've got more money to pay more people), and
besides that the value of the donation would be fluffed out by the addition
of software, their operating system is overpriced, as is their office
software, and I feel that it would benefit school children more to be
introduced to unix, as, though most computers are running windows out there,
the internet constitutes the largest mass of computing power, and it is
primarily running unix, and about 50% of it is linux, and though at this time
there is more work in using windows systems, Linux is a young operating
system in comparison, and its use in embedded and special purpose systems
means that it will eventually become more common. By the time 6-12 year old
children are looking for work, unix will be the basis of most computer
systems (as it already is within the higher-level government organisations in
america, due to it's greater maturity in networking which means it is more
secure).

Making Microsoft only provide hardware will mean that a greater number of
children will have access to computers, as about 15% of the average computer
system cost is microsoft software, that means they will have to provide 15%
more hardware than they otherwise would have. Also giving Red Hat the
opportunity to provide its software will be a big step towards balancing the
lop-sided current situation with respect to just exactly how dominant windows
is, especially in the future. Besides this, the average poor family, should
it be able to provide the children with a home computer, would be wise to
choose a free operating system, as, to use australian dollars, it would mean
they could buy an aud$600 computer, and spend au$20 on the cd's for the
operating system. Otherwise they would be forced to have to cover the cost of
a microsoft operating system, most likely win95, which is buggy as hell, but
it's also the cheapest at about au$125. And then there's ms office. Sun's
Star office would be the sensible alternative, and where I am at least you
can get red-hat linux, star office and even mandrake linux as well for au$20.

Anyway, I hope that you choose to take up red hat's offer, perhaps though get
other companies to contribute operating systems too, like mandrake, caldera,
sun etc. as the singular donation from red hat would be favouring them too
much.

- --
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-----BEGIN PGP SIGNATURE-----
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